

LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

Sokhary Chau
Mayor and Chairperson

Jackie Doherty
Vice-Chairperson

Susie Chhoun
Eileen Delrossi
Dominik Lay
Connie A. Martin
Stacey Thompson

**Joint Human Resources & Labor
Relations and Equity & Access
Subcommittee Meeting**

Wednesday, October 26, 2022
City Hall – City Council Chambers
5:30 p.m.

Tel: (978) 674-4324
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Human Resources Members Present:

Chairperson Martin and Ms. Delrossi
Mr. Lay arrive at 5:35 p.m.

Equity & Access Members Present:

Chairperson Thompson and Ms. Doherty
Mr. Lay arrived at 5:35 p.m.

School Department Personnel Present:

Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer

Chairperson Martin called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. SY2022 – 2023 Strategic Goals, Actions and Deliverables
2. Discussion: 2018 Audit
3. Discussion: Scope for the 2022 HR Audit

Ms. Martin stated that the Subcommittee would start with the 2018 Audit and the Scope for the 2022 HR Audit.

Superintendent Boyd stated that TNTP provided a 100-page report to the administration at the end of the summer on the Human Resources Department that can be viewed by the Committee if they wish to see it.

Ms. Doherty stated she would like to see and would like it for the next meeting. She then asked the administration what had been done to adhere to the guidelines.

Dr. Hall stated that everything hasn't been adopted, but he believes the office has made substantial progress. He stated that it was less than a year when the report was received before the pandemic. He stated that Ms. Phillips and himself have been reaching out to firms. He stated that they haven't adopted a compensation study, but a compensation RFP is being launched. He stated that the district is evaluating all employees. He stated that more staffing has been added to the Human Resources Department with the approval from the Committee. He stated that Exit Interviews have been piloted and are being tracked. He stated more funds are being put towards recruiting. The compendium process has been improved. He also stated that in 2019 Affinity Groups were launched.

Ms. Phillips stated that the TNTP is a landscape analysis. A grant from the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) was received to gather information around diversification in the work force. TNTP surveyed students, families and staff as well as did interviews and focus groups. The district received a second grant for an implementation plan. There are four (4) areas that were identified as primary drivers: Data Usage, Data System, Recruitment and Best Practices and Retention Strategies. She stated she will report back to the Committee with the implementation plan.

Ms. Martin asked what the survey was asking because she believed the groups would be in favor of this. She stated that we already know that this is good thing.

Ms. Phillips stated that she believes it's important to hear it from the families and what difference it makes.

Ms. Martin asked if we are tracking the success of the recruitment trips.

Dr. Hall stated he can provide more information, but he believes we hired two (2) candidates.

Ms. Thompson asked if a proposal for the Audit is accepted how long will that take.

Dr. Hall stated six (6) weeks to two (2) months. The bid will be for thirty (30) days. Overall, he stated it's a four (4) month process.

Ms. Thompson asked what the level of equity experience is in the Human Resources Department.

Dr. Hall stated that Ms. Yann, Assistant Human Resources Director has accomplished a lot.

Ms. Thompson asked if everyone was trained.

Dr. Hall stated that he tells everyone in the Human Resources office that we are all Equity Officers. He stated that he has great confidence in his team.

Ms. Thompson asked how many Affinity Groups.

Dr. Hall stated he believes five (5) or six (6) groups.

Ms. Delrossi stated that the recommendation for a HR Technician in each of our schools from the 2018 Audit was not taken.

Dr. Hall stated that due to budget constraints that wasn't brought forward and he believes it could risk confidentiality. He stated once there is more time he plans on having Human Resources trainings.

Ms. Delrossi asked if the new onboarding process would help with the compendium.

Dr. Hall responded yes.

Ms. Thompson asked why we don't have a Human Resources Director.

Superintendent Boyd stated that there were cost restraints, but it is being revisited.

Ms. Martin stated that we want diversity and when the interview process is being conducted what are the end results.

Ms. Doherty stated that she believes there are still communication issues and that we need better communication in the city. She stated that we need better communication with our employees. She stated that we should look at having Human Resources Technicians in schools. She stated that she believes there is a feeling of mistrust from district employees and she believes it is worse than in 2018.

Ms. Martin stated that she doesn't believe communication issues can be audited.

Ms. Delrossi stated that hiring should be from within and we need to look at that.

Ms. Thompson stated that we need to do more with the equity component. She stated that we should be connecting with organizations to help. She stated to quantify the communication piece would be the ability to have a panel of people who have left in the last five (5) years. She asked how career ladder opportunities with employees are discussed. She stated having a separate Human Resources place for employees to be able to talk is something to consider

Ms. Doherty asked if something could be provided at the next meeting for their review.

Ms. Thompson asked about Human Resources trainings.

Dr. Hall stated that he plans on doing more regular trainings. He stated that the Audit is going to take a lot of time and will tax the staff and he would prefer to not have the Audit.

Superintendent Boyd stated that we could have external reports as opposed to an Audit.

Ms. Martin asked if the administration can show her something concrete that things are being done correctly, because she stated she is hearing that things are not being done correctly in regards to the hiring process and it is upsetting to hear. She is hearing that the process is inappropriate, that the screening committee results are ignored or that someone is coming in at

the 11th hour and receiving the job and if the Committee can be shown that things are being done ethically, effectively and consistently she would agree to forego the audit.

Superintendent Boyd then spoke about his strategic goals/performance of the Superintendent and he stated that a lot of people have weighed on his report.

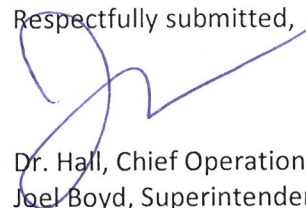
Ms. Martin stated that we have both quantitative and qualitative ways to evaluate the Superintendent, but we have looked away from quantitative ways. She stated it should read what the plan is and what does the implementation looks like. She stated that each goal should have at least one (1) tangible goal that does track to an actual number.

Ms. Thompson stated that she agreed w/Ms. Martin. She stated that it needs to be measurable and it builds transparency with the community.

Ms. Doherty also agreed. She stated that she would recommend that we wait until we meet with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) before making a decision.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to adjourn at 6:47 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Martin. 4 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi) APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dr. Hall', written over the typed name.

Dr. Hall, Chief Operations Officer for Dr.
Joel Boyd, Superintendent and
Secretary, Lowell School Committee

JPH/mes